

Words don't mean a thing



By David Schmidt, 1993.

Bible reference: Matthew 25:31-46

Characters: Six people. 1, 2 and 3 are well dressed and prosperous looking; 4, 5 and 6 are shabbily dressed (especially 4).

Props: Three Bibles

1, 2 and 3 enter, stand on left side of stage and read from Bibles.

1: Jesus said,

2: When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

3: All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people,

1: One from another,

2: As the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

3: He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

1: Then the king will say to those on his right,

2: Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.

4, 5 and 6 enter and stand on the right side of the stage, listening to 1, 2 and 3 and becoming increasingly agitated as 1, 2 and 3 continue.

3: For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat,

1: I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,

2: I was a stranger and you invited me in,

3: I needed clothes and you clothed me,

1: I was sick and you looked after me,

2: I was in prison and you came to visit me ...

4: [interrupting] But this year my family will be hungry. Who is going to feed them?

5: I'm still thirsty. Who will be my friend?

6: I'm a stranger here. Will anyone welcome me?

4: Look at my rags. Who will put shoes on my children's feet?

5: I'm sick. Who will hold my hand?

6: I'm still imprisoned. Who will show me love?

4: [*in disgust, indicating 1, 2 and 3*] Words. That's all they offer.

5: [*agreeing*] But their words don't mean a thing.

6: They claim to love others, but their love is cold and judging.

4,5,6: Just another empty New Year's resolution. [*4,5 and 6 freeze in attitudes of disgust and disillusionment.*]

1,2,3: [*to each other, confused, indicating Bibles but no longer reading*] But we are called to love.

1: [*reaching out to 4*] To give our lives to those around us. [*4 turns her/his back on 1, 2 and 3.*]

2: To change our ways, [*reaching out to 5*] to welcome strangers. [*5 turns her/his back on 1, 2 and 3.*]

3: To feed others with love and compassion, [*Reaches out to 6*] not avoidance and hate. [*6 turns her/his back on 1, 2 and 3.*]

1, 2 and 3 drop hands, embarrassed, defeated.

1: [*to 2 and 3, shrugging*] Where can we go [*has an idea*] ... except to the Lord?

2: [*catching on*] For he will forgive.

3: [*catching on too*] He will understand.

1: [*looking up, as if in prayer*] He will give us courage.

2: [*looking up, as if in prayer*] He will show us the way of compassion.

3: [*looking up, as if in prayer*] He will show us how to give ourselves.

1: [*excitedly to 2 and 3*] He has shown us these things.

2: [*excited*] In his life.

3: [*excited*] In his death.

1: In his resurrection.

2: [*putting Bible down*] Let's live in his resurrection hope.

3: [*putting Bible down*] Let's give our lives to others.

1: [*putting Bible down*] And live our lives for others. [*1, 2 and 3 go over to 4, 5 and 6.*]

2: [*touching 5 on the shoulder; 5 turns toward 2*] Being a Christian is about caring.

3: [*touching 6 on the shoulder; 6 turns toward 3*] As God cared for you.

1: [*offers hand to 4, who slowly turns around and takes it*] So care for one another.

ALL: [*joining hands*] Let's care for one another this year.